

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
April 27, 2021  
1:35 p.m.

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CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Foster called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Neal Foster, Co-Chair  
Representative Kelly Merrick, Co-Chair  
Representative Dan Ortiz, Vice-Chair  
Representative Ben Carpenter  
Representative Bryce Edgmon  
Representative DeLena Johnson  
Representative Andy Josephson  
Representative Bart LeBon  
Representative Sara Rasmussen  
Representative Steve Thompson  
Representative Adam Wool

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

SUMMARY

HB 69        APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

HB 69 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 71        APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

HB 71 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

Co-Chair Foster reviewed the agenda for the afternoon. He indicated that there were no other bills on the agenda. He wanted to use the meeting time to answer any questions members might have on the budget. He indicated Mr. Painter and Mr. Anderson were available for questions.

#hb69

#hb71

HOUSE BILL NO. 69

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making reappropriations; making supplemental appropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17(c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund; and providing for an effective date."

HOUSE BILL NO. 71

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and capital expenses of the state's integrated comprehensive mental health program; making supplemental appropriations; and providing for an effective date."

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Representative Thompson noted that it had been mentioned earlier that there might be some language that could be used by the conference committee. He wondered if there was language that would be placed in the budget during the conference committee process.

Co-Chair Foster did not think Mr. Anderson had had an opportunity to speak with Legislative Legal Services on the issue. He asked Representative Thompson to provide further clarification on his question. He reported that the May 19, 2021 deadline was looming, and there was a need to determine what could be done in conference committee.

Representative Thompson was not completely aware of what could be accomplished in conference committee. He thought it was possible to make some changes to the language section and to move revenues to different places in the budget without having to go to free conference. If it was possible, it might move the budget forward in conference committee.

Co-Chair Foster explained there were three stages of conference committee. The first stage was considered

regular conference committee where members could only choose between the House and Senate versions for each conference-able item. If an agreement could not be reached, the committee could ask for powers of limited free conference. A limited free conference committee could choose the House version, Senate version, or anything in between. If an agreement was not reached, the committee could request powers of free conference which would allow members to add completely new items. If the committee reached the stage of free conference, the conferees would change out. He would check with Legislative Legal Services about all available options. He liked Representative Thompson's idea of moving things along in a reasonable timeframe. He did not want session to continue into the summer, as it could create complications. Without an on time budget, the government could shut down on July 1, 2021. However, the state was not currently at that stage.

Co-Chair Foster indicated Representative Edgmon had joined the meeting. He reported there were no other questions from members. He relayed that amendments were due by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28, 2021. The committee would begin hearing amendments on Thursday morning, April 29, 2021.

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Vice-Chair Ortiz asked what the committee would be doing on the following day. Co-Chair Foster replied that the committee had bills previously heard on the agenda. He deferred to Co-Chair Merrick. Co-Chair Merrick thought the committee would continue hearing a couple of bills. She would notify members via email. Co-Chair Foster stated that the 9:00 a.m. meeting was still on the schedule.

HB 69 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 71 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#  
ADJOURNMENT

[1:41:26 PM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m.